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ABSTRACT

The paper provides a sketch of the development of phenomenological pedagogy as it has been represented in the Netherlands in the work of educators and psychologists at the Utrecht School. Phenomenology is the theory that behavior is determined by the interaction of personal experience with external reality. Proponents of the Utrecht School have developed phenomenological evaluation paradigms to counteract the current stress in curriculum and teaching evaluation on technological concerns such as cost-efficiency, effectiveness criteria, accountability, and means-ends thinking. Major features of phenomenological pedagogy are that it: (1) aims to be a practical science which seeks to understand its objects and to determine how to act in relation to them; (2) analyzes specific situations to develop a body of scientific knowledge about education; (3) applies situation-analysis to experiences to yield descriptions of ways in which people relate to their world; and (4) is always undertaken with the intent of providing recommendations of pedagogic practice. The conclusion is that only phenomenologically based theories can generate an educational philosophy which encourages children in their self-interpretation of responsible adulthood. (Author/DB)

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATIONAL THEORY: THE UTRECHT SCHOOL

(draft paper)

by

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Introduction*

In the nineteen fifties the work of a group of individual scholars coalesced, and became identified as the Utrecht School. The individuals making up the group were a distinguished and dedicated lot. Langeveld, who founded the Institute for Didactic and Pedagogic Studies at the University of Utrecht, was the great pedagogue. Buytendijk was prominent in psychology, and Rümke was the renowned psychiatrist. Other important names associated with the work of the Utrecht School were Beets, Van Lennep, Bijl, Van den Berg, Linschoten, Kouwer, Vermeer and Van der Zeyde. More recently, a small group of educators also associated with the University of Utrecht have set the task of continuing the earlier explorations. The pedagogy of the Utrecht School is an approach that is unfamiliar or foreign to most contemporary North American educational researchers. It is foreign in that it adopts a whole set of unfamiliar criteria defining that which is important, i.e. yielding a different prioritization of concerns, in educational research. These unfamiliar values will first be explicated briefly through the work of M. J. Langeveld.

Langeveld's work is not only representative, it is central; a review of his work alone would provide a valid picture of the philosophic context of social and intellectual thought in which the phenomenological pedagogy of the Utrecht School is grounded. Since 1930, Langeveld has been active as clinical or practicing pedagogue, university professor, and founder and director of the Institute for Pedagogic and Didactic Studies. He has been a dominant influence on the educational scene in the Netherlands for more than a quarter century. Publishing scores of books and articles in both the Dutch and the German languages, Langeveld set himself to the task of developing a systematic pedagogy or theory of education which he and others have termed "phenomenological pedagogy".

Langeveld has been described as a typical representative and shaper of the so-called Geisteswissenschaftliche pedagogy (Stellway, 1973). This places his work in close spiritual relation to the tradition of German pedagogic thinking which finds its early inspiration in the philosophy of Husserl and

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A partial bibliography is provided at the end of this article.

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Heidegger and in the social philosophic thoughts of Dilthey, Schleiermacher, Bollnow, Litt and Flitner. Langeveld himself also mentions the influence on his work of the personalistic psychology of Ludwig William Stern and especially that of his early tutors and advisors H. J. Pos, whose main interested was the phenomenology of language, and Philip Kohnstamm, who then dominated the field of pedagogic and didactic studies at the University of Amsterdam.

A way of illustrating the extent of Langeveld's influence on educational thought in the Netherlands and Germany is to trace the use of his text Beknopte Theoretische Pedagogiek (Concise Theoretical Pedagogy) which sets out to discover, by way of descriptive phenomenological situation-analysis, the main constitutive pedagogic categories. Langeveld wrote this text for use at Pedagogical Academies for school teachers and as a study text in university programs. Beknopte Theoretische Pedagogiek was first published in 1945 and revised in 1970; it went into its fifteenth edition in 1974. Six editions of this book had appeared by 1971 in the German language, as well as a translation into Japanese. An English translation has been attempted, but due to cultural-language differences, a satisfactory draft has not yet been produced. Langeveld's German text Studien Zur Anthropologie des Kindes (Studies toward an Anthropology of the Child) is also phenomenologically grounded, and this phenomenological approach is even more strongly evident in his Die Schule als Weg des Kindes (Schools Make People).

To fully understand Langeveld's work, it is necessary to clarify the notion of "phenomenological pedagogy". Both "phenomenology" and "pedagogy" are terms less frequently used in North American literature. "Pedagogy refers to the art or profession of teaching. The term derives from the Greek "paid-agogos" meaning "teacher or leader of boys". In everyday English, the term "pedagogue" has acquired negative connotations--typifying someone "who instructs in a pedantic or dogmatic manner" (Webster). This is not the case in the Netherlands where teacher education institutions are known as "Pedagogical Academies" (Pedagogische Akademies). In this paper, the term pedagogy is therefore broadly used to refer to educational topics and questions

which map or overlap with curriculum and teaching-learning concerns. "Phenomenology" is a name which is mainly used to designate a movement in the social and human sciences, which has as its primary objective the direct investigation and description of phenomena as consciously (i.e. pretheoretically) experienced. The most basic idea of this task is, according to Spiegelberg (1965), that the phenomenologist seeks to become as free as possible from unexamined preconceptions and presuppositions and from causal explanations, statistical data, and factual detail about the phenomena investigated. Recently, a variety of different approaches in the social sciences have been designated as phenomenological.

On several occasions, when discussing the phenomenological aspect of his work, Langeveld (1972) has noted that, following Husserl, there are two aspects to the idea of phenomenology: the reference to method and the reference to philosophy. Langeveld has stressed that his intent is not to contribute to a transcendental or philosophical phenomenology but rather to develop a pedagogy which is grounded in phenomenological method (p. 105). What precisely is meant by this? It is clear that "method" in a phenomenological sense cannot be equated simply with "techniques", "tools for doing research" or "methodological procedures".[2] In other words, phenomenology is not something one simply borrows from the discipline of social science or philosophy in order to apply it to the field of pedagogy. Using examples of representative research efforts employed by members of the Utrecht School will be examined in later portions of this paper.

There are several assumptions associated with phenomenological pedagogy, but it is a characteristic feature of phenomenological method that in the process of inquiry and theory-building, assumptions regarding the concept of man, the nature of learning, and views of knowledge are constantly pushed up front, where they can be reflectively explicated. This is evident when Langeveld coins the word "animal educandum" to explicate his assumptions regarding human nature. Humanness is not something with which a child is

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[2]Gadamer once remarked that the title of his book on hermeneutics (or the phenomenology of social understanding) Truth and Method (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) had been chosen somewhat tongue in cheek. "The method of hermeneutics is that there is no method," smiled Gadamer.

born but rather something to which a child is born, he says. The human child is born to the promise of educational potential; it is this "potential of educability" that distinguishes a young homo sapiens from the newly-born among the rest of the animal species. A human child is not just someone who can be educated, says Langeveld, it must be educated, by virtue of its need for extended care, security and the need for growth opportunities to become an autonomous human being. Every child wants to become someone him- or herself: a person--that is, someone with personality. Clearly these are personalistic elements in Langeveld's philosophical anthropology[3] which he inherited from the German psychologist W. Stern and the Dutch theosophic pedagogy of H. Kohnstamm.

One of the most fundamental assumptions of Langeveld's pedagogy which is also most difficult to translate into the ethics of the North American research community is the need for educational research to train its focus on the epistemological, the normative, and the pedagogic structure of life-experiences simultaneously. Thus, a phenomenological description of important edu tional phenomena is not in itself a pedagogically complete piece of research. Such would be the topic of a phenomenological sociology or anthropology which has chosen to stake out its research domain in the classroom (rather than in the workplace, streetcorner, or a deviant subculture). One should be careful, therefore, not to confound the phenomenological research of the Utrecht School with the more recent developments in phenomenologically oriented research such as Mehan's ethnomethodological studies of children's interpretive skills and communicative competence (1974) or even the classroom ethnography by Smith and Geoffrey (1968). Pedagogy, in the sense of Langeveld, cannot be reduced to sociology, to philosophy, nor to any other single structure. Phenomenological descriptions always are constructed within the integrity of an ongoing interpretation of the meaning and purpose of what it means to educate, i.e., to interact with the child

[3]Philosophical anthropology is a term which is quite frequently used in European writings. Philosophical anthropology is the general discipline concerned with the study of the nature of being-human and of the different conceptions which guide man's interpretations of himself and his world.

towards emancipatory goals. In short, educational research must always be structured pedagogically; [illegible], it should be grounded reflectively in the emancipatory norms toward which all education is oriented. Langeveld has argued persuasively that neither biological nor behavioral (natural) social sciences can provide the norms of humanity against which the facticity and the purpose of pedagogy can be tested. This is one of the main themes in Langeveld's pedagogy.[4]

No doubt the Utrecht School would share the phenomenological protest against reductionism.[5] The chief objective of phenomenology is to strive for enlarging and deepening the range of the common sense world of everyday experience--thinking, feeling, and acting: the life-world (Lebenswelt) of Husserl. In an unpublished paper entitled "Phenomenology and Pedagogy", presented at an international conference on phenomenology at the University of Rotterdam in 1977, Langeveld emphasizes again how the concept of life-world has been central to the pedagogical investigations of himself and his co-workers at the University of Utrecht. Langeveld supports Husserl's task to develop a "science of the life-world". And he also subscribes to the idea of a constitutive and descriptive method, but he does not wish to follow Husserl's attempt to construct a "transcendental subjectivity" or an "egology of consciousness". Langeveld argues that it is possible to reject Husserl's transcendental philosophy without defeating the integrity of phenomenological method as scientific work and praxis (Langeveld, 1972, p. 109). Given this fundamental starting point of Langeveld to develop a pedagogy on phenomenological principles, it is not surprising that one finds an explication of a whole set of existential-phenomenological assumptions.

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[4] In a brief essay on Langeveld's impact on foreign (most German) literature Beekman recognizes five main themes in the pedagogy of Langeveld" (1) Langeveld's theory is dynamic; (2) His theory is dynamic because of his methodological starting point: phenomenological situation-analysis; (3) His theory is dynamic in its anthropological vision: being human is self-interpretation; (4) Langeveld's theory has a dynamic practical-normative dimension; (5) Research and information must be structured pedagogically (1971, pp. 518-527).

[5] This can be illustrated strikingly from the title of Langeveld's recent book on the use of tests in the life of children: Intelligence You Live Yourself, (Meppel: Boom 1974).

For example, prime importance is given to the idea that, in spite of biographical and developmental determinants, the growing child is seen as actively and freely constructing its own life-project. This is Langeveld's principle of human maturation: "human becoming" as dynamic self-interpretation. True pedagogy involves assisting the child in coming to terms with, and transcending, the very constraints (constraints which make a behavioral pedagogy possible) which would stand in the way of a reflective and autonomous passage toward responsible adulthood. Pedagogy has to provide ethical and practical guidance to this process.

On this theoretical base was the Utrecht School built: the early works of Langeveld and Buytendijk (in the field of psychology) combined with a wave of like-minded studies during the fifties. During the sixties, there was a period of general decline, largely due to the influence of the competing empirical-analytic, natural-science paradigms inspired by the North American research movements. Not until recent years, in the seventies, has a renewed interest led back to the earlier pedagogic explorations. (This is reflected, for example, in a new series of publications edited by Beekman, Dasberg, and Tak).

In the remainder of this paper, an attempt will be made to lift out some of the essential features of samples of the work of the Utrecht School from roughly 1945 to 1978. Four critical features of phenomenological pedagogy will be highlighted: (1) that it aims to be a practical science; (2) that situation-analysis plays a central role in its "method"; (3) that situation-analysis yields life-world descriptions; and (4) that this form of knowledge has implications for practical action.

1. Phenomenological Pedagogy is a Practical Science

Pedagogy is a science which seeks to understand its objects not only to know how things are, but to understand what it studies in order to know how to act (1974, p. 13). This is how Langeveld in 1944 begins his first major treatise on the idea of pedagogy as a practical science. Pedagogy is a practical science which finds its starting point in the concrete pedagogic situation. Langeveld's use of the word "science" (wetenschap) derives from the term "Geisteswissenschaften" which is closely aligned to philosophy and which is best translated as "the science of human mind and human experience". As in the Anglo-Saxon usage of this term, "science" in Langeveld's terms makes claims to objectivity, but this objectivity is grounded--not positivistically, but hermeneutically--in interpretation theory. Consequently, the word "science" in the usage of the Utrecht School has unfamiliar connotations. It focuses on the subjectivity of pedagogic situations, on the interpretation of the inner experience, and on the ground structures of the lived world.

In a recent book on phenomenological schooling for educators, Beekman (1977) criticizes the often blatant technological ideology which seems to dominate theories of education and teacher-training programs. This critique is not foreign to North-American educators; the works of Huebner, Kliebard, and Apple are well-known examples. The dominant preoccupation of contemporary research in North America (and also in the Netherlands) is with managerial problems motivated by cost-efficiency and effectiveness criteria. As faculties and colleges of education react to the political demand for accountability and quality control, educational processes are reduced to systems processes focusing on measurable skills, managerial competencies, and instructional behavioral objectives. This would appear to be the only way that educational leadership can respond in a culture which seems to equate the process of education with commodity production. It seems then, that educational research and policy formation are in danger of committing the mechanistic fallacy--that of ignoring the most human element: man's subjectivity.

Beekman notes how in the Netherlands, too, "the development of investigative instruments and techniques dominates educational research. Increasing amounts of time and funding is invested in sophisticated techniques.

And the processes of information and data becomes ever more "advanced", or so one says," remarks Beekman wryly (1977, p. 94). In all our educational research we should breathe a bit more school air, argues Beekman. Phenomenology can be a countervailing force against the increasingly externalized experiences, drained of all subjectivity, which dominate the pages of educational research journals. A phenomenological approach can contribute to a more humanized theory of schooling (Beekman, 1977, p. 94). "Back to the things themselves" was Husserl's watchword to which all those who consider themselves phenomenologists subscribe. It is in this sense, too, that the phenomenological orientation is seen to be practical. It responds to the need in research for routes of access to an understanding of classrooms, schools and learning activities as they are experienced by children, teachers, and parents for whom schools and curricula are natural components of everyday reality.

We see in the work of Beets, Langeveld, Buytendijk, and others a concern with the "social constructions of everyday life" and with the taken-for-granted features of life-worlds and concrete situations. The early proponents of the Utrecht School built on Husserl; but as Langeveld (1977) recounts, the resources were scarce. Most of the important works by Schutz and Luckman, and developments in the contemporary social sciences such as the ethnographic and phenomenological orientations in anthropology and the field of education were not yet at their disposal.

An analysis and investigation of the main features of the experienced world is an enormous task, one which undoubtedly leads us in several directions. First we might observe how various recent branches of sociology and anthropology have begun to undertake this task. Ethnographic procedures, as exemplified by Jackson (1968) and Smith and Geoffrey's (1968) classroom ethnography, have been used in attempt to find some mid-range theories in the everyday going-on of classrooms and school life. These midrange theories would allow for a better fit between the everyday practical experiences of teachers and students and the expectations implicit in guiding educational theories and principles. This improved "fit" would thus allow for increased explanatory understanding and more realistic predictive control of those educational experiences. A closer look at the earlier and more recent approaches in classroom ethnography (see Magoon, 1977) shows that much of this research still attempts to serve the leading knowledge interests

of empirical-analytic science (van Manen, 1973): "Raw data" such as "positive feelings by students toward the teacher" are not analyzed for their interpretive or verstehende grasp of classroom realities. Instead these descriptions are treated as concepts which are sought to "join" other such concepts in "propositions hypothesizing causal links--for example, 'Increased teacher awareness leads to increased pupil esteem.' And such propositions can be linked to other concepts in further propositions, such as, 'Increased pupil esteem leads to increased classroom control.'" (Smith, 1968). In a recent review of ethnographic educational research, Overhold and Stallings (1976) point out that in addition to the traditional educational hypothesis testing, ethnographic accounts are utilized to generate situation-specific hypotheses. Thus when Magoon, in defending the validity of classroom ethnographic studies, states that such studies "can hardly be described as radical departues from current scientific ideals in educational research" (1977, p. 680), he seems justified--though unintentionally ironical.

More "emic" variations[6] of descriptive techniques and ethnographic observations have also been used to a limited extent to yield a verstehende grasp of the day-to-day, lived, negotiated, talked-through, talked-about, used, misused, and endured structures, meanings and processes of schooling. Gilbert Ryle and the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) borrowed the concept "thick description" from Malinowski to describe the method and aim of an interpretive ethnography. Thick description, according to Geertz, is not an experimental science in the search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning:

> "The thing to ask about a burlesqued wink or a mock sheep raid is not what their ontological status is. It is the same as that of rocks on the one hand and dreams on the other--they are things of this world. The thing to ask is what their import is: what it is, ridicule or challenge, irony or anger, snobbery or pride, that, in their occurrence and through their agency is getting said." (p. 10)

[6]"Emic" derives from "phonemic" and is a term used by Pike (1954) to describe a form of ethnography which focuses on the meaning aspects rather than the structural, formal "etic" (from phonetic) components of cultures.

Thick description leads to ethnographic research which treat schools and classrooms as cultural scenes: the aim is to "describe" the cultural experience of, for example, being a student in an urban high school (Davis); in a third grade class (A. Doyle); or on the playground at recess time (S. Parrott).

Various applications of ethnomethodological inquiry into classroom and school settings are closely aligned to the interpretive and verstehende method of phenomenological research. Ethnomethodologists such as Mehan, Mackay, Sacks and Cicourel make it their business to elucidate how taken-for-granted and seen-but-unnoticed rules lie at the basis of everyday communications and interactions between social actors. For example, Mehan (1973, 1974) has shown how interpretive skills on the part of children are crucial but unrecognized (seen-but-unnoticed) requirements for the normal conduct of classroom lessons. Ethnomethodologists are able to show how teachers "unknowingly" make certain normative demands on their students, implicitly assuming that certain communicative competencies on the part of the pupils can be employed in standard classroom procedures such as lecturing, questioning, reading, testing, and achievement evaluation. Communicative competence and interpretive skills depend upon unexplicated expectations--those regarding certain ways of talking and acting--being recognized by the students as appropriate rules for classroom interaction.

The phenomenological pedagogy of the Utrecht School has in common with the aforementioned approaches in that it employs an interpretive methodology. But it is more closely related to existential phenomenology and philosophical anthropology than to classroom ethnography, ethnomethodology, language analysis, or ethnographic "thick description". Although the early work of the Utrecht School antedates most of the recent developments in phenomenological sociology, ethnomethodology, cognitive sociology, symbolic interactionism, and so forth, there are certain epistemological features of its research domain which it shares with the inheritors of theorists like Alfred Schutz, Wittgenstein, and Peter Winch. In this, the work of the Utrecht School stands close to the phenomenology of Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Max Scheler, and existentialists such as Sartre and Camus.

Not only sociologists and anthropologists should be concerned with social rules, norms, and values as objects of study; Langeveld's conception of pedagogy as a science has to broaden its concept of research to embrace this normative element into its very method. By so doing, the phenomenological pedagogy of Langeveld would assume dialectical and praxiological dimensions. Indeed, Hohmann (1971), who recently has reviewed Langeveld's significance for the German readers, notes the larger role which "praxis" occupies in the pedagogy of Langeveld: "One should read Langeveld's pedagogy as an engaged theory which pursues primarily practical intentions, without however, slipping into dogma" (p. 94). Although Langeveld's concept of emancipatory practice is not an explicit Marxist concept, Hohmann draws comparisons with the work of critical theorists such as Habermas: In Langeveld's pedagogy, "praxis (plays) a role which must be distinguished conceptually from the neopositivistic framework, but which finds definite parallels in the critical theory of the Frankfurter Schule." (quoted in Beekman, p. 525).

However, from the point of view of social-political theory and especially the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, phenomenological approaches in education suffer from a lack of more radical critical reflection of the historical-situatedness of their life-world studies. Langeveld's Schools Make People provides a clear example of the potential contributions as well as the epistemological limitations of the phenomenological perspective for producing important educational knowledge.

> "This book is written with the purpose to see the school as an institution which adults have set up to serve children. It is about that particular form of life which is directed at offering young people the help of education on their way from childhood to adulthood. My interest is to pursue a study of an "anthropology of the school" and thus I wish to see the school as a product fulfillment by assuming that the school is the world of the child". (Langeveld, foreword, 1967, p.5).

In Langeveld's Schools Make People, there is little to be found of the sometimes oppressive and dehumanizing experiences which children endure in the process of schooling. The smaller neighborhood schools in the forties and fifties in the Netherlands and Germany probably were less alienating institutions than the sometimes huge and bureaucratized high-schools in North America.

But there is little doubt that in other respects--especially in terms of the elitist nature and stratified structure of curricula, schools and school systems--schooling in the Netherlands and Germany was, and still is, for many children a frustrating and self-defeating experience. The pedagogy of Langeveld is not sensitive to this radical-critical dimension of an emancipatory dialectic. Indeed this "blindness" of the phenomenological method to the distorting relations which may underlie the structure of socially-constructed views has become topic of lively debate in recent social philosophy and social critical theory.[7] Langeveld's investigations may not be of primary interest to radical critics of schooling. "We do not wish to subject the school to a critique, but we would want to understand her, let us say for now: as a sort of amphibian between generations. We want to know what it is that makes the school into a world wherein children must live as a passage-way that generations must follow" (Langeveld, 1967, p.9). The word "must", according to Langeveld, implies two kinds of "necessities": (a) one which is imposed from the outside as it were:--by the parents, the community, or the society; and (b) the other necessity which describes the pedagogical necessity that the child must be educated toward responsible and emancipatory adulthood. This conception of the meaning of the school is inextricably tied in to Langeveld's above-mentioned conception of the child as "homo-educandum". One is not born as child, as a human being, rather one is born to the potential of being educated toward humanness.

What is the relationship between "child" and "student"? This leads to the question: What is being-a-child? Social science has taught us much that we can empirically observe about children and learning behavior, but we know too little about the child as a way of being human, notes Langeveld. What does this mean for the teacher as pedagogue?

> "The teacher's assignment is amphibious: he has to be at home in two worlds" the world of the child and of the task. That is why it is asserted that he is the one who must constantly make compromises; others assert however that the teacher's problem is how to find

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7See for example the debate between Habermas (1971) and Gadamer (1970). Also see K.O. Apel's recent "Types of Social Science" (Social Research, Fall, 1977) wherein he examines the nature of complementarity of the relationship between natural science, phenomenology and critical theory.

> mediation between the child and the task. I think both assertions are correct but together these conceptions are still incomplete. Frequently there are compromises, frequently there are mediations--in essence oftener mediations I believe--but when dinner has been served the child has to eat it as well. The real miracle takes place in the child. Or do we really know what happens precisely, when a child comes to "understand" something, when it now "knows" something? (Langeveld, 1967, pp. 50, 51).

It is precisely this last question that seems to be programmatic for the phenomenological pedagogy of Langeveld and his colleagues of the Utrecht School. And with this program, they have transformed pedagogic inquiry to a particular form of practical science.

II. Situation Analysis

There are two senses in which the concept "situation" plays a key role in phenomenological pedagogy:

(a) As a definition of pedagogic practice: a pedagogue demonstrates his or her practical competence in the manner by which he or she can structure a social situation into an educational situation.

(b) With reference to the method of pedagogic inquiry: situation-analysis is the manner in which phenomenological pedagogy develops a body of scientific knowledge about education.

The meaning of the idea of situation in pedagogic thinking has been debated extensively by the authors of the Utrecht School and especially in the German literature. Flitner (1950) had pointed out that the pedagogic situation should be approached in a hermeneutic-pragmatic vein, thereby attaching to the idea of situation-interpretation (hermeneutics) a normative dimension (pragmatics). As in the practice of medicine and law, the emphasis in pedagogy is on responsible action in situation-specific circumstances.

In the phenomenological-existentialist frame the "situation" is the viewpoint of the human-"being" in the world. "Being" means "being-in-a-situation" and "interpreting-this-situation" in personal freedom, albeit under the constraints of contingent facticity. That is, a person is addressed in a particular way by his factual situation even though this facticity does not necessarily convey the signficance of a correlational connection or causal influence. From the phenomenological perspective the facticity of a situation should be seen as the occasion for, not as the causality of, human behavior. The pedagogic situation comes into being only as the result of the active intervention of the educator. By sensitively perceiving, analyzing, and judging concrete situations the educator attempts, by restructuring the situation, to steer in the direction of an educational situation. In an article entitled "The Situation-analysis in Educational Science", Feldman (1963) argues that situation-analysis belongs to the descriptive reflective component of the educational enterprise--propaedeutic to the active and purposive structuring of concrete educational situations. In this way, Feldman makes the distinction between analytic-descriptions of pedagogic situations and the concrete structuring of pedagogic situations.

This raises the question how situation-descriptive categories (such as situation-perception, motive-for-acting, etc.) can be translated into normative, situation-structuring actions. Throughout his work, Langeveld poses that the educator must develop his insights in the concrete situation and that, from that source, practical action must receive its pedagogical orientation. Stellway (1970), who was one of Langeveld's contemporaries at the University of Amsterdam, is critical about the problematic relationship between the idea of situation-specific knowledge and the valid translation of such knowledge into practical action. In using the term "educational situation", Langeveld does not refer to the generalized situation or the epochal concept but rather to the concrete individual situation. And yet the function of situation-analysis for Langeveld is unambiguously and definitively prescriptive (p.38). The pedagogical analysis of situations is supposed to lead to practical action, to the active structuring of educational situations. But Langeveld is convinced that the norms of pedagogic action are implicitly contained in the educational situation. In every concrete circumstance, these norms manifest themselves by means of a correct application of an explicity and concrete situation analysis. Beets (1975) notes how this practical attentiveness to the pedagogic potential of (educational) situations closely relates pedagogic thought to existential philosophy: pedagogic thought describes, analyzes, clarifies, corrects, and provides direction to concrete existential situations.

Like most adherents to existential phenomenology, proponents of the Utrecht School hold that it is possible to obtain insights into the essential structures and relationships of (pedagogic) phenomena on the basis of a careful study of concrete examples[8] supplied by experience or imagination and by systematic variation of these examples in imagination. The work of Langeveld, Buytendijk, and their co-workers can best be understood against this backdrop of the emerging existential phenomenology, of men like Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Langeveld wrote his Beknopte Theoretische Pedagogiek at approximately the same time that Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and Binswanger wrote their major works. The Utrecht School adopted from Husserl the desire to develop a science of subjectivity, of the life-world. Therefore, the emphasis in phenomenological pedagogy

[8]Indeed Buytendijk once referred to phenomenology as "the science of examples".

is on the concept of the life-world and educational situations. The difference between Husserl and his followers at the Utrecht School is that the latter accepted Husserl's theme of the natural attitude and the life-world as an avenue that would lead to a new pedagogy and a new psychology. However, like the existentialists, they did not (and do not now) want to follow Husserl on his path to the creation of a transcendental phenomenology wherein all subjectivity would be formalized--cut off from its concrete and existential referents.

But what then is the nature of situation-analysis? How is it done? In Beleving en Ervaring, Beekman and Mulderij identify three distinct, but interrelated facets of the investigative studies of the proponents of the Utrecht School: (1) there is the gathering of life-experience material; (2) this material is investigated for its descriptive-analytic forms, or ground-structures; (3) recommendations and orientations to practical action are formulated. These component facets then are the integrative elements of a descriptive pedagogy and psychology. In the classic studies by Langeveld, Linschoten, Van den Berg, and others, these three elements are artfully interwoven in masterly descriptions. But for newcomers to the enterprise of phenomenological method, such descriptions are virtually impossible to reconstruct. For this reason, Beekman is experimenting with a systematic set of procedures for leading educators and students of pedagogy into the artful practice of phenomenological situation-analysis. How do you begin a phenomenological investigation? Beekman and Mulderij (1977) make the following suggestion:

> "Describe a personal, simple experience as much as possible in life-world language; watch out for interpretations and causalities in the description, and do not get lost in factual details. The important point is the "lived" aspect of it (p. 28)."

The participants in such a workgroup are given assignments to write out personal experiences describing such topics as "waking up", "the sickbed", "stealing apples", "fear of the dark", and so forth. The following is an example of a description by one of the partipants of the phenomenon of "fear of the dark":

> When I return home from work in the evening, I usually take the shorter route. The short cut is at least ten minutes faster. I leave the well-lit street and ride my bike toward a dark, hollow road. The dark road has high shoulders on the sides, and it lies in front of me like a gaping mouth. I enter the road with a feeling of anxiety and uncertainty. As soon as the last street-light and house disapper behind me, I feel as though I am digested

by the darkness. It totally encapsulates me and is everywhere. I feel afraid of something that doesn't want to identify itself. This fear is different from fear of dogs for example. You know dogs, and can arm yourself against them with a stick or by taking another road to avoid them. Darkness is a different adversary. I feel threatened from all sides at once without knowing exactly what direction it comes from. As I hastily continue along the dark road my eyes pick up any sign of movement. I try to ascertain the meaning of every sound I hear. When I hear nothing unusual, I feel somewhat relieved: that was only a bird suddenly taking flight, that is the wind whispering through the treetops. Identifying sounds and naming them calms me down. But no matter how I train my eyes and sharpen my hearing, my back always feels unprotected. "It" can come from behind and yet I don't look behind me. By pushing extra hard on my bike pedals, I try to make my back feel secure. I cycle on and stay on my guard. Then, suddenly I stiffen with fright; as if my legs are paralyzed: Is someone standing there? A shape looms up ahead of me, a human figure. As I come closer I sigh with relief; it is nothing, only a bush. I am immediately inclined to recognize a human form in anything. And the worst it seems that can happen to me here is to meet another person. If I happen to pass someone in this darkness, I will keep my eyes firmly fixed on him, watching him guardedly. I cannot help but distrust him. Any person who is found in this desolate location cannot mean well. In the distance the first streetlights become visible and I see the signs of the first houses again. I sigh deeply and a feeling of "all is well" comes over me. I lessen my push on the pedals. Looking behind now the darkness ebbs away from me. If I meet someone now I won't feel afraid. I will look at the person and say "goodnight" even if I don't know him". (pp. 31, 32).

Naturally, the writing-out of a personal experience is not in itself a phenomenological description, but it is a preparatory component of phenomenological method--comparable to data collection.

The next task is to examine this personal life-experience description for its structural elements. The author of the above description recognized the following structural components of "fear in the dark":

(1) Darkness is a threat which does not have a definite location: it is everywhere;

(2) Darkness is an unidentifiable threat--it has no identity, no concreteness;

(3) There is increased sensory alertness, especially the perceptual and auditory senses;

(4) What is behind one--the "unprotected flank--is experienced as most vulnerable and threatened;

(5) There is an inclination to see human faces and shapes in everything;

(6) One has the physical sensation of increased breathing, more rapid heartbeat, feeling of weakness in the limbs, etc.;

(7) Passersby are distrusted;

(8) Darkness is a challenge -albeit a frightening one, it has elements of adventure.

Exercises such as the above are further experimented upon by varying the examples or by thinking through analogous experiences. This is an attempt to look at the same phenomenon using different perspectives which may be only slightly different from one another. Next, the field of intersubjectivity is expanded by complementing personal life-world material with new material obtained from such sources as existentialist or phenomenological literature. poetry, novels, diaries, interviews, folk wisdom, observations, and art. The attempt is to come to an understanding of a given phenomenon through exhaustive description (rather than through causal explanation). For example, structural components of "fear of the dark" can be reaffirmed though a selection from Tom Sawyer: Tom is waiting in bed for Huckleberry Finn. Their plan is to go to a graveyard together, taking with them a dead cat. This is the only way to get rid of warts. Huck promised to signal Tom by meowing under his window:

> "So he lay still and stared up into the dark. Everything was dismally still. By and by, out of the stillness little, scarcely perceptible noises began to emphasize themselves. The ticking of the clock began to bring itself into notice. Old beams began to crack abroad. A measured, muffled snore issued from Aunt Polly's chamber. And now the tiresome chirping of a cricket that no human ingenuity could locate, began. Next the ghastly ticking of a death-watch in the wall at the bed's head made Tom shudder--it meant that somebody's days were numbered. Then the howl of a far-off dog rose on the night air and was answered by a fainter howl from a remoter distance. Tom was in agony. (Twain, 1972 p.70)".

The same kind of structural elements are visible:

(1) the threat of darkness coming from all directions;

(2) the non-identifiability of the threat;

(3) the increased sensory awareness.

After the murder in the grave-yeard, the journey home for the boys is even more frightening.

> "The two boys flew on and on towards the village, speechless with horror. They glanced backward over their shoulder from time to time apprehensively, as if they feared they might be followed. Every stump that started up in their path seemed a man and an enemy, and made them catch their breath . . ." (Twain, 1972, p. 76).

Structural components:

(4) the sense of being vulnerable from behind;

(5) seeing shapes and faces in everything

(6) bodily sensations (here, "catching their breath");

(7) negative seeing (a man and an enemy). (From Beekman and Mulderij, 1977).

Such exemplifying material is chosen on the basis of (a) its authenticity, i.e., it should represent flashes of the real life-world; and (b) its potential for yielding to structural analysis and its potential contribution to eventual phenomenological pedagogy. A solid piece of phenomenological research in the sense of the Utrecht School should make visible the ground structure of the pedagogic or psychological phenomenon that is being investigated.

III. Situation-Analysis Yields Life-World Descriptions

The idea of a practical science of the life-world was probably most interestingly pursued in the more psychologically oriented studies contained in Persoon en Wereld (Person and World). The book (edited by Van den Berg, and Linschoten, and dedicated to Buytendijk) was meant as an experiment with "the possibilities of a new psychology": an exposee of the kinds of dialogues man holds with his world. Buytendijk's (1951) formulation of this ideal was to be the Leitmotif, the guiding conception, of this endeavor in psychology and pedagogy:

> "We want to understand man from his world, that is, from the meaningful ground structure of that totality of situations, events, cultural values, to which he orients himself, about which he has consciousness, and to which his actions, thoughts and feelings are related--this is the world in which man exists, which he encounters in the course of his personal history and which he shapes through the meanings he assigns to everything. Man is not "something" with characteristics, but an initiative of relationships to a world which he chooses and by which he is chosen."

Beekman tells how talented scientists wrote jewels of descriptive-analyses and heavy treatises about their methodology. You can admire them he says, and sometimes follow their thoughts, but seldom can you follow in their footsteps (1977, p.13). Person and World contains some of the best contributions to the phenomenological enterprise of the Utrecht School. Each article is a fascinating and careful description of the structure of some aspects of the life-world. The following are but a few examples: "The Secret Place in the Life of the Child" (Langeveld), "The Hotelroom" (Van Lennep), "About the Repulsion of One's Nose" (Rümke), "Face and Character" (Kouwer), "Aspects of Sexual Incarnation" (Linschoten), "Gene and Body Sensation" (Buijkhuis), "The Conversation" (Van den Berg), "Psychology of Driving" (Van Lennep), The Man Who Did Not Possess Anything" (Langeveld). It is important to remember that phenomenological descriptions can only be grasped in their totality. It would be impractical to translate any of the above studies in their entirety here. Instead some brief paragraphs have been selected which may provide an illustrative sense of the nature of analytic descriptions. The following is taken from Van Lennep's article on the "Psychology of Driving":

> "The car-driver does not steer his car through the traffic situation. This way of talking would give the impression as if the driver stood outside of his car, as it were, while manipulating it as an object among and between other objects. The good driver is "one" with his car, i.e., the car becomes a part of his body. It is a peculiar feature of an instrument that the human being uses it as an extension of the body. One might say that our touch is transferred to the end of a stick when we draw a line in the sand with the end of the stick. The driver is as broad as his car is broad. He does not "measure" whether he can go through something, but after some time he "feels" this. However, he only feels it when he sits behind the wheel. Whoever sits beside the driver undergoes all the misery of the so-called back-seat driver syndrome. We are startled by objects which we would not fear if we were in the driver's seat ourselves. That is because, as competent drivers, we see the road situation with the pedals and with the steering wheel. Our motor reactions are not solely dependent on our perception (as was thought in earlier days), but our perception, which in practical life is always a pragmatic perception, is also dependent on our motor involvement. We only see how a situation is for us is we can act in a purposive manner. The passenger, who suddenly takes over the driver's seat, knows at once how the world changes in appearance. The complexity of meanings is altogether different for the driver and the passenger. We notice different things and the same things assume different aspects. The figure-background relationship has undergone a fundamental change. An attractive girl, who would have been a "figure", is now suddenly reduced to background, or at any rate should be." (p. 160)."

Van Lennep attempts to describe in some detail how the world of the car driver is meaningfully constituted, without focusing however on personal differences and contingencies of individual drivers. He describes the road as "world" where driver and the car are engaged in a complexity of traffic situations and where social rules and expectancies are experientially explicated. For example, Van Lennep shows how driving is an expression of man's sociality while it has an isolating aspect as well.

> "It is an essential feature of driving that the driver is cut off from the social sphere in which he and his fellow citizens normally live their lives. In this, he is still expected to conduct himself socially--but in a manner which accentuates his isolation. It is clear that in this process of isolation egoistic, egocentric individuals run the special risk of the danger of the road. Maybe it is exactly this isolation process which subconsciously attracts a great number of drivers. Consequently, highway traffic without accidents may never be possible. In the car, man a-socializes himself (p. 167).

This example illustrates how events of daily life become the object of study of phenomenological psychology and pedagogy: travel, the sickbed, the conversation, the hidden place, the hotelroom, driving a car, and so forth.

The objective of the various authors is to get at the ground structures of selected phenomena. The analysis finds its point of departure in the situation. And a situation is any worldly complex of meanings in which a person finds himself and to which he simultaneously assigns meaning. While phenomenological method in some sense is much less rigorous and complex than statistical-experimental procedures, the hermeneutic rigour and artful sensitivity which characterizes the work led the Dutchman, Bijl, to comment on the elitist nature of the Utrecht School. Indeed, one might argue that experimental research can be done by any social science student who has put some statistics courses under the belt--but the method of phenomenology may require some less "trainable" competencies.

Using analytic descriptions of real and imagined experiences, the ground structures of pedagogic situations are "uncovered". In doing this the phenomenologist continuously appeals to the sense we have in common: he invites us to insert our own experiences in a reflective dialogue. That is, you the reader are invited to collaborate in the construction of analytic descriptions. This is how Langeveld (1963) leads us into the pedagogic sense of "the secret place in the life of the child".

> "Even though the child moves through the familiar rooms of his house, it is in the same house that he encounters the experience of entering the foreign world. The forbidden room of Blue-Beard too was part of the house which he otherwise trusted to his bride. Not in a strange but in her own, familiar house, lay the fascinating secret of the closed, locked off, foreign area. Yet, as we shall see, it is not the forbidden room which constitutes for the child the secret world in his own house. It is the "secret place" which presents the child in the most ordinary manner with the experience of entering a strange, unknown world." (p.11).

In describing "the secret place in the life of the child," Langeveld shows how the familiar home has its secret places for the young child -- in the attic, under the staircase, in the deep closet, behind the curtain.

> And can I be sure that behind the curtain these lifeless objects are not gazing at me, while crouching and getting ready for an unexpected leap? Let us look behind the ruffled creases of the curtain: there stands a docile stove doing what a good stove seemingly should be doing. However, we only need to lift the curtain and let him into the familiar world which is lived-in by our daily activities--the stove may only hesitate a moment. But when he seizes the opportunity to serve as ship canon or robot he abdicates the idle usefulness of ordinary appliances. He assumes special meaning and thusly becomes an essential aspect of the world in which we live. And yet, this world is not entirely "fulfilled by us". There is something vague and unidentifiable that seems to force itself upon us. For example, we sense this when behind us the

> lightly lifted curtain suddenly drops down. We catch our breath and the blood rushes to our head: "Who did that?" The "unperson" of the secret place has stirred himself in space, in the flashing moment of the fleeting instant" (p. 13).

And Langeveld shows how these places perform important pedagogic functions in the child's growing up:

> "The hidden place is withdrawn from involvement and therefore it is a place of rest. "Peace" reigns there only because human interaction is suspended: it is held in abeyance. In the hidden place the child can find solitude. . . This is also a good pedagogical reason to permit the child his hidden place and to respect this right to asylum, or at least to tolerate it" (p. 19).

While structures of the "secret place" are sensitively explored and magnificently described in Langeveld's study, we can also perceive in the description the limiting case of the phenomenological "clarification" of the life-world of the child. On the one hand, we gain greater clarity of the child's unfolding experiences. And we learn to render practical those greater understandings within the scope of our pedagogic sense-making competencies. However, we may be in danger of glossing over those cultural and socio-economic forms which predispose us to encounter selective life-world experiences and experiential structures.

In Langeveld's description of the secret place are found structural referents for the need for private and unshared space and the need for a personal "hiding" place where one can "escape", or rest.

> "In adults the need for an appreciation of a private place, a space which assumes personal meaning, never disappear--because this need is inseparably connected with the essential personality of humanness. However, it is no longer a "secret" place, that is, a place without destination which has not acquired fixed meaning and in which the world is still free, unformed, and indeterminate. Now it has become the place where we live with our family, with loved ones; this is our home, our studio, and our neighborhood pub where we are patrons" (p.31).

The question is whether such aspects of the life world as the secret place are universal structures or peculiar to a mode of being in a particular culture, in a particular historical period. In light of this question, and despite the universalizing character of the idea of deep structure which underlies a descriptive-analysis of life-worlds, the examples given (i.e., concrete life-world illustrations) seem relative to culture and time. This implies that the knowledge yielded by phenomenological pedagogy can not make positivistic claims to absolute truth independent of the here-and-now.

IV. Phenomenological Pedagogy as Practical Action

Phenomenological investigations are executed, says Beekman, with a view of consequences for practical actions. On the basis of investigative results the attempt has to be made to formulate, on the basis of pedagogic situation analysis, recommendations which could lead to more possibilities for human autonomy (1977, p. 51). As mentioned above, Beekman observes that the typical phenomenological studies in the tradition of the Utrecht School can be analyzed in terms of three components: (1) they are made up of life-experience material, (2) they provide a descriptive-analysis of some aspect of the life-world, and (3) the phenomenological descriptions contain recommendations for pedagogic practice. For example, in Langeveld's "the secret place in the life of the child" the practical recommendations are woven right into the text (see the quote from page 19). But the intent of all pedagogic or educational knowledge is practical only in the sense that it is meaningful in concrete situations where the adult or educator meets the child or student. It seems clear, however, that this formulation of the relationship between situation-analysis and the practical action of educators raises the question concerning how this transition from descriptive-analytic knowledge to practical action is achieved. This is the epistemological problem of all educational theory. It is the problem of linking, in some validating manner, knowledge to practical action. In the case of phenomenological knowledge, it raises the question of how to act in concrete and individual situations, without allowing the mediating function of technically exploitable principles and generalizations to intervene (see van Manen, 1977).

There are at least two ways of exploring a response to the issue of the pragmatic function of phenomenological knowledge. One such response is a "negative" one. Essentially it denies that empirical-analytic knowledge is appropriate for pedagogic action. This is justifiable, because by elevating pedagogy (educational concerns) to the level of natural or empirical-analytical science, pedagogy is lifted right out of the ethical and normative domain in which it finds its natural legitimation. Science

(in a behavioral sense) forgets that pedagogy is essentially a moral and intersubjective enterprise. In the desire to explain teaching-learning processes and to intervene in curriculum activities, the dominant concern of research and development is to produce "principles", "methodologies", "techniques", "measurable objectives", and "input and output variables" which externalize and objectify the educational process. The striving for nomological knowledge of educational processes is rooted in the presupposition of the axiomatic predictability and explanatory character of human behavior. In other words, there is the assumption that laws of human behavior possess an invariant character which makes possible a universal validity across time and location. In this nomothetic search, there is no place for the idea of personal responsibility, self-motivated intentionality and freedom to act deliberately and spontaneously in pedagogic situations. Instead, education is seen as a systems enterprise wherein educators fulfill the task of instrumental manipulation with the means and ends of the instructional process.

The other response to the question of the pragmatic function of pedagogic knowledge revolves around the idea of "ground structure" which lies at the root, supposedly, of common aspects of the life-world. The idea of "ground structure", in the sense of Langeveld and Beets, is not unfamiliar to present day social science (although it should not be confused with the structural-functionalist notion of "system structure" and "patterns of social organizations"). The concept of ground structure goes back as far as Plato and has been revived in present day social science in a variety of forms: deep structure, grammar, auspices (see McHugh et.al., 1974). These terms are referents to a method which seeks to make visible the existential grounds of everyday talk, interactions, interpretations, definitions, negotiations, and happenings which constitute the life-world of our personal and shared experiences. But the concept of deep structure can also be used as a metaphorical referent to the idea of pedagogic competence. In other words, the idea of "ground structure" should not be thought about as some irreducible structure of reality (the physicalist fallacy) nor should it be seen as a mental construct (psychologism). Rather, the idea of deep structure or ground structure can be viewed as a "method" that can be employed to acquire hermeneutic-pragmatic insights into the forms-of-life-of-humanity

which make the variety of cultural life-forms comprehensible and accessible for practical action. In this sense then, one could say that phenomenological descriptions may contribute to practical educational competence even though these descriptions do not consist of behavioral data-collecting schemas based on observational skills or techniques. Rather a description may be seen as practical, in a communicative sense, if it contributes to the deep structure of our understanding of a certain phenomenon.

Discussion of the practical function of pedagogic knowledge as conceived by the Utrecht School is notably absent in the literature. It seems clear, however, that pedagogic situation-analyses (i.e., as life-world descriptions) are not practical in an obvious technical-instrumental sense. Langeveld does admit that, in the main, he does not address himself to specific curriculum subject-matter concerns. And when he does, he seems to compromise the phenomenological vantage point with a more positivistic means-ends orientation (1974, pp. 105-143). Does this mean then that phenomenological pedagogy does not belong in the realm of curriculum concerns? The answer to this question seems to depend on how confidently one can learn to think about teaching, learning, classrooms, and schools in a non-positivistic, non-technical manner. By seeking to discover ways of meeting this challenge, the experiments in educational theory by the Utrecht School may contribute to the field of curriculum thinking and to educational thought in general.

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